



Making Tracks

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Layout: Rene Parker, *Administrative Staff Assistant*



Making Tracks
Missouri Department of Conservation
2360 Hwy D
St. Charles, MO 63304
www.mdc.mo.gov

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Mark your calendar and plan to attend the
Maple Sugar Festival
on Saturday, February 19,
from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. at
Rockwoods Reservation in Wildwood.

This event is free of charge and open to all.
Great hands-on activities,
demonstrations and hikes.
Don't forget to bundle up!

For more information call (636) 458-2236.



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Making Tracks

St. Louis Regional Calendar of Events

February 2005

Volume 05, Number 02



How Sweet It Is! Maple Sugar Festival

By Anna-Lisa Tucker, *Naturalist*

Saturday, February 19
10 a.m. – 3 p.m.



One frosty winter morning, I stood in my kitchen making pancakes for my husband and daughter. They were both still asleep, and I wanted to surprise them with a breakfast that would more than satisfy their appetites. As I began to set the table, I smelled the sweet aroma of maple syrup warming in the microwave. While waiting with anticipation to smother my pancakes with the syrup, I started to wonder how this fantastic creation was made. Where could such a wonderful and sweet taste originate? I decided that I had to find out. Little did I know that this small interest of mine would forever change the way I looked at trees.

The art of making maple syrup has been documented as far back as the early 1600s. Native Americans were the first to discover this sweet sensation. They found that a watery substance, or sap, would flow from trees in late winter. If they took this sap and boiled it down, it produced a sweet sugar and syrup. This led me to wonder what exactly was happening in the trees that this sap would produce such wonderful byproducts. It almost sounded too good to be true!

In the fall, when the growing season comes to an end, trees and plants store this sugar in the form of starch in their roots. In late winter and early spring when the temperatures are just right (below 32 degrees at night and above 40 degrees in the day), the sap begins to flow back up to the leaves to provide nourishment for the new growing season. This also proves to be the best time to tap the trees to make

syrup. Sugar maples are the best trees to tap because their sap contains the highest amount of sugar, roughly 2-3 percent sugar and 97-98 percent water. Other trees, such as boxelders, red maples, silver maples, basswood and black walnut, can also be tapped to make syrup, but more sap is needed!

It's fascinating to know that people are not the only ones to benefit from this tasty treat. Yellow-bellied sapsuckers can be seen throughout most of Missouri drinking the sugary sap before migrating north to their breeding grounds. Honeybees, rabbits and squirrels also will benefit from a broken branch that drips sap to the ground.

Who would have guessed that frosty morning in my kitchen would greatly change my perception of so many trees. Now as I hike the trails at Rockwoods Reservation, I no longer just look at these magnificent pillars as a habitat for wildlife, but I look at the trees as a sweet resource we've only begun to understand. Join us February 19 for our Maple Sugar Festival as we try our hand at this forgotten pastime. This free event will include crafts for the kids, demonstrations of the syrup-making process, taste tests to see if you can tell which syrup is the real one, collection of sap from the trees and other events sure to keep you talking until the next sugaring season. We hope to see you there. It's sure to sweeten up your day!



2360 Hwy D, St. Charles, MO 63304 Office hours are Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
For reservations call (636) 441-4554 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From Hwy 40 take Hwy 94 south to Hwy D; turn west on Hwy D for approximately 3 miles. The area entrance is on the north side of Hwy D. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/buschca/

2

Whose Scat Is That?

Wednesday3:30 – 4:30 p.m.

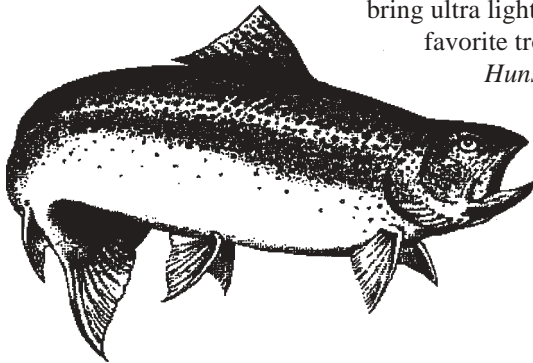
(Ages 7-10) You call it poop and I call it scat. Learn whose scat is that with helpful identification hints. We will take a short trek to find scat in its natural placement. *Naturalist: KyLee Brockmann.* (Reservations begin January 18.)

5

Trout Fishing

Saturday10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

(All Ages) Learn to tie a fly, then try to catch a rainbow trout on your fly. Please bring ultra light fishing gear if possible and your favorite trout bait. *Naturalists: Mark Hunstein & Bob Zeigle.* (Reservations begin January 21.)



5

Little Lost Creek Hike

Saturday10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

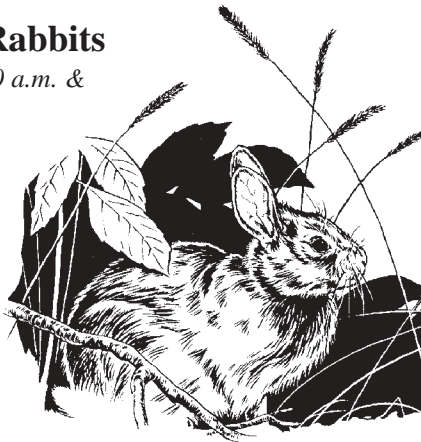
(Ages 16 & up) Join us for a 4-mile hike through one of Warren County’s most beautiful Conservation Areas. Please dress for the weather and bring a sack lunch and plenty of drinking water. *Naturalist: Shanna Raeker.* (Reservations begin January 21.)

8

Habits of Rabbits

Tuesday9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 11 a.m. – Noon

(Ages 3-6) Being a rabbit may seem like it’s easy, but sometimes it’s really scary. Find out what rabbits have to be afraid of and what a rabbit’s life is really about. *Naturalist: Kathy Thiele.* (Reservations begin January 25.)



12

Dresser Island Hike

Saturday9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

(Adults) Eastern St. Charles County has become a wintering area for more than 70 trumpeter swans. These swans, bald eagles and white pelicans are attracting an ever-increasing number of nature enthusiasts to this area to view wildlife. Join us for a cool 6.5-mile hike along the Mississippi River to view this amazing concentration of wintering birds. Your MDC naturalists will provide spotting scopes. *Naturalist: Marvin Staloch.* (Reservations begin January 31.)

26

Bluebird Houses

Saturday9 a.m. – Noon

(All Ages) Learn about Missouri’s state bird and build a nesting box to take home (one per family). Bring a hammer and Phillips screwdriver. This program is indoors. *Naturalist: Dick Baumann.* (Reservations begin February 11.)

August A. Busch Shooting Range & Outdoor Education Center

2360 Hwy D
St. Charles, MO 63304
(636) 300-1953 ext. 251
www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/busch

PUBLIC RANGE HOURS
May 1 through September 30
Friday through Monday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Tuesday 2 p.m. – 8 p.m.
October 1 through April 30
Friday through Tuesday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

These hours are subject to change.
Please call the range for updated hours.

CLOSED DAYS
Wednesday and Thursday
All State Holidays

RANGE FEES
Rifle/Pistol Range: \$3 per hour/per booth
Trap/Skeet Fields: \$3 per round/per person
Shotgun Patterning: \$2 per person for every set of three 40 inch patterning targets
Broadhead Archery Range: \$3 per hour/per person
Group or Special Use Permits: Please call to inquire.
Note: Peak usage: 1 hour maximum per permit.
Eye and ear protection is required on all ranges.

Jay Henges Shooting Range & Outdoor Education Center

1100 Antire Road
High Ridge, MO 63049
(636) 938-9548
www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges/henges

PUBLIC RANGE HOURS
May 1 through August 31
Wednesday 2 p.m. – 8 p.m.
Thursday through Sunday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
September 1 through April 30
Wednesday through Sunday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

CLOSED DAYS
Monday and Tuesday
All State Holidays

RANGE FEES
Pistol/Rifle Range: \$3 per hour/per booth
Trap Range: \$3 per 25 targets/per person
Shotgun Patterning Range: \$2 per hour/per person
Archery Range: \$3 per hour/per person
Range Special Use Permit: \$20 per hour/per permit
Building Use Permit: Inquire
NOTE: Peak usage: 1 hour maximum per permit
Trap Ranges: No shot size larger than 7 ½
Pistol/Rifle Range: No center fire ammunition large than .50 caliber
Ear & eye protection is required on all ranges.



Throughout February, enjoy outdoor shooting sports at our ranges.

Archery *Rifle/Pistol* Shotgun Patterning* Trap/Skeet

Ranges are closed on state holidays and for special events.

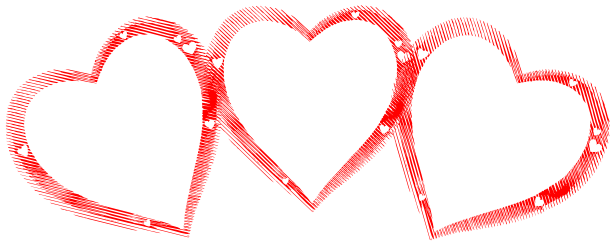
For program information, check our website: www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/ranges

Rockwoods Reservation

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2751 Glencoe Road, Wildwood, MO 63038 Office hours are Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For reservations call (636) 458-2236 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 take Hwy 109 north 4 miles to Woods Avenue; left on Woods Avenue, and then immediately right on Glencoe Road. From Manchester Road take Hwy 109 south 2 miles to Woods Avenue; right on Woods Avenue, and then immediately right on Glencoe Road. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/stlouis/



5 Valentine Paper-Making

Saturday 1 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

(All Ages) Bored from the winter blues? Then join us as we return to the days of old and create your own charming, handmade valentines using recycled materials. Discover how to turn your everyday trash into unique, delicate paper and decorate your creation with dried flowers. *Naturalists: Karen Kelly & Trish Senter.* (Reservations begin January 21.)

12 Endangered Species

Saturday 10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

(All Ages) Did you know that the turkey was once endangered? What is the difference between “endangered” and “extirpated”? Join us and discover which plants and animals are in peril and how conservation efforts may help. *Naturalists: Glenn & Trish Senter.* (Reservations begin January 31.)

19 Create Maple Sugar Magic!

Saturday 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

(All Ages) What could be more enticing on a cold winter morning than a stack of flapjacks with real maple syrup? Everyone is invited to Rockwoods Reservation to learn about the history of maple sugaring. This free event will begin in the Education Center, where you will learn the history behind this old Missouri tradition. Be sure to bundle up the kids because we will head outdoors to our sugar bush to collect some maple sap. Along the way, learn to identify a maple tree by its buds and unlock some of the mystery behind why the maple sap is flowing. Stop by the Sugaring Shed and watch sap boil down into tasty syrup! Note: In case of extremely severe weather, this program will be canceled. (Reservations begin February 1.)



Columbia Bottom Conservation Area

February 2005 Page 3

801 Strodtman Rd., St. Louis, MO 63138 Office hours are Wednesday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturday – Sunday from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

For reservations call (314) 877-6014 Wednesday through Sunday 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-270 north take the Riverview Drive exit (last Missouri exit); go north approximately 2.8 miles. Riverview Drive becomes Columbia Bottom Road at its intersection with Larimore Road. The entrance is on the right-hand side. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/areas/bottom/

2 Retiree River Ramble

Wednesday 9 a.m. – Noon

(Ages 60 & up) Enjoy a leisurely hike along with other seniors on the 3-mile River’s Edge Trail. This hike is specifically for folks over age 60 and will be at a pace suited to this age group. This month we will be looking for beaver signs, eagles and groundhogs (specifically to note if they see their shadow!). Cedar waxwings flock to feed on cedar berries and other fruit. Chickadees begin to sing this week. If weather is wet, we will use the Levee Trail. *Volunteer Naturalist: David Petree.* (Reservations begin January 19.)

5 Nature Crafts for Scouts

Saturday 10 a.m. – Noon

(Bear Scouts) Calling all **Bear Scouts**; join us as we work on activities from Elective 12, Nature Crafts. We will explore leaf identification and animal tracks and plant seeds, while working towards this badge. We will also build waterscopes and bird callers to take home and enjoy! *Naturalist: Lisa Reid.* (Reservations begin January 21.)



6 Off the Beaten Path

Sunday 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

(Families) Join us as we go “off the beaten path” to explore Columbia Bottom. Discover animal signs and all sorts of other treasures by going where most people never go. *Volunteer Naturalist: Craig Vincent.* (Reservations begin January 21.)

12 Valentine Paper

Saturday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

(Families) Put your heart in the right place this Valentine’s Day by making a valentine out of recycled paper! Learn how to make paper out of natural material and recycled paper. *Volunteer Naturalist: Kathy Schroeder.* (Reservations begin January 28.)

18 Owl Prowl

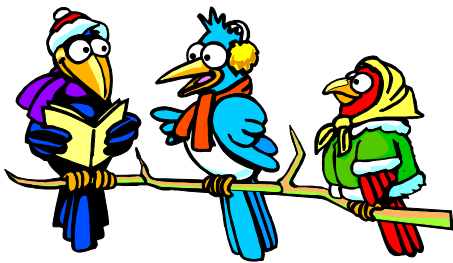
*Friday 6 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.,
7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. &
8 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.*

(All Ages & Scouts) “Who Cooks for You, Who Cooks for You All?” Do you know which owl has a call that sound like this? Join us as we learn about the owls that call Missouri home. Discover the special adaptations that make them able to fly and hunt at night. Take a guided stroll to listen for and, hopefully, call some owls in close. Warm clothing is a must for the walk portion of this program. *Naturalists: Rhonda Anderson and Lisa Reid.* (Reservations begin February 4.)

22 Nature Story Time

*Tuesday 9 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.
(Ages Birth-3)
(Ages 3-6) 10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.*

Join us for a story time packed with animal adventures and natural wonders. While it may be too cold to explore outdoors, we will learn about what animals do all winter long. *Naturalist: Lisa Reid.* (Reservations begin February 9.)



28 Homeschool Special: Working for a Living

Monday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 7-12) Work, work, work! Everybody has a job to do, even plants and animals! You might have to make your bed, but what kind of work does a tree do? What do the words producer, consumer and decomposer mean? Join us as we discover ecosystems, niches, food chains and how living organisms interact. *Volunteer Naturalist: Lena Dowers.* (Reservations begin February 12.)

11715 Cragwold Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122 Nature Center hours are daily from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

For reservations call (314) 301-1500 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on our waiting list. Interpretive services are available for those with hearing loss with 5 days notice. From I-44 east in Kirkwood, take Watson Road, exit and turn north on Geyer Road. Follow Geyer Road 200 yards to Cragwold Road. Go 1 mile west on Cragwold Road. Visit www.mdc.mo.gov/areas/cnc/powder/

February

Scout Discovery Table

Conservation Careers & Area Information
Daily

(All Ages) Check out the many opportunities in the field of conservation and pick up information about conservation areas in your backyard. Designed for **Junior Girl Scouts** to accomplish Let’s Get Outdoors: Your Outdoor Surroundings #7 and for **Cub Scout Bears** to accomplish Achievements #5 c & d of Sharing your World With Wildlife. All are welcome and encouraged. Check it out! (No reservations necessary.)



7 Hiking at Powder Valley

Monday 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

(Adults) Join us in the great outdoors as we explore Hickory Ridge Trail in the winter time. *Volunteer Naturalist: Tom O’Gorman.* (Reservations begin January 24.)

10 Amazing Mammals

Thursday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 3-6) Discover how amazing mammals are through song and activity. We may go outside, so dress for the weather. *Naturalist: Colleen Scott.* (Reservations begin January 27.)

10 Homeschool
Vertebrates of Missouri

Thursday 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

(Ages 7-12) Investigate the five vertebrate classes through activities and outdoor exploration. Dress for the weather. *Naturalist: Catherine McGrane.* (Reservations begin January 27.)

11 Moonlight Hike & Bonfire

Friday 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

(All Ages) Hike the trail by moonlight and discover the winter night. Return to the bonfire for warmth and hot chocolate. *Naturalist: Catherine McGrane.* (Reservations begin January 28.)

14 Hiking at Powder Valley

Monday 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

(Adults) Join us in the great outdoors as we experience the joy of hiking Broken Ridge Trail in the winter time. *Volunteer Naturalist: Tom O’Gorman.* (Reservations begin January 31.)



19 Sal’s Pals Herp Survey

Saturday 10 a.m. – Noon

(Ages 12 & up) If the salamanders can come out, so can you! Join us for the first of a 3-part series while we take inventory of Powder Valley’s amphibians and reptiles. Dress for the weather. You can sign up for only one session this month. Look for the next session in April. *Naturalist: Colleen Scott.* (Reservations begin February 4.)



25 It’s Time to Come Out
of Hibernation
Discovery Table

Friday 10 a.m. – Noon &
1 p.m. – 3 p.m.

(All Ages) Early spring reptiles emerge from over-wintering retreats. Come learn about Missouri’s common snakes’ habits and habitats. *Volunteer Naturalist: Ed Witte.* (No reservations needed.)

26 Sal’s Pals Herp Survey

Saturday 10 a.m. – Noon

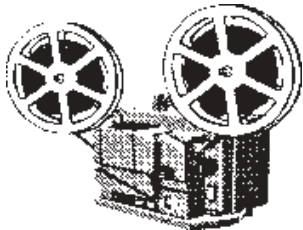
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Powder Valley
Conservation
Nature Center

Films

February 2005

Presented on
Saturdays &
Sundays



February 5 & 6

10 a.m. – 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Eyewitness: Prehistoric Life (CC)

Eyewitness: Mammal (CC)

11 a.m. – Noon & 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Furbearers of Missouri (CC)

Fish (CC)

February 12 & 13

10 a.m. – 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

I Dig Fossils

Eyewitness: Dinosaur (CC)

11 a.m. – Noon & 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Triumph of Life: The Mating Game (CC)

February 19 & 20

10 a.m. – 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Eyewitness: Amphibian (CC)

Magic School Bus: Hops Home (CC)

11 a.m. – Noon & 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Hawks: FNL

Wild in the City

February 26 & 27

10 a.m. – 11 a.m. & 1 p.m. – 2 p.m.

Bugs Don’t Bug Us

Eyewitness: Insect (CC)

11 a.m. – Noon & 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Our Wild Inheritance

Outdoor Activities II

Shown in Auditorium - Free of Charge -
Groups Welcome!

Children’s films 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. & 1 – 2 p.m.

All Ages films 11 a.m. – Noon & 2 p.m. – 3 p.m.

Films are subject to change.

No Reservations Necessary



FEBRUARY HALLWAY ARTIST
CHUCK WITCHER

Powder Valley is pleased to have the paintings of Chuck Witcher on display in our hallway exhibit this month. Chuck graduated with a BFA from Washington University in 1955. He did studio art in Detroit, Mich., working for clients such as General Motors and Chrysler. After serving in the United States Air Force for three years, he worked in the advertising and art department of McDonnell Douglas Corporation, receiving many awards in industrial competitions. He is a member of the Missouri Wildlife Artists’ Society and the winner of the 1995 Missouri Trout Stamp contest and an Honorable Mention in the 1996 Missouri Duck Stamp competition. Chuck can currently be found doing wildlife art in the St. Louis area for his own business, “Chuck Witcher Wildlife Graphics.” Please come out and enjoy Chuck’s artwork.

ANNOUNCEMENT:



You can join ‘em for dinner,
but you can’t have ‘em for dinner.

Our fish-feeding schedule has changed.
The fish in PV’s aquarium are fed every Sunday at 1 p.m.

Powder Valley Volunteer Milestones

Joyce Broughton.....2900 hours
John Gerwitz.....400 hours
Julie Hoijarvi.....600 hours
Joan Hummel.....3300 hours
Christine Jeep.....400 hours

Arta Kirk.....900 hours
Rita Mueller.....1100 hours
Joseph Schleeper.....1400 hours
Ed Witte.....2500 hours